In Camp Two miles South of
Murfreesboro Tenn^{a} Jan 9th 1863

Dearest Lydia,— Once more I seat myself to write you a few words, I have but little that is new to write about, as you will no doubt be made acquainted with our condition here, by James Hastings letter than I can tell you in a letter,— he left here to day and I sent a small letter by him but it was such a very poor apology for a letter that I am ashamed of it, but I felt too near sick to write a word,— You can get the particulars of the battle from him better than I can write it for he was on the ground at the time, I have been pretty near sick for the last four days, I have taken a severe cold and my teeth, had a general time of ulcerating but I feel better to night,

We have a very fine camping ground, in a fine grove, with a small river running near by— and the opinion is that we will remain here for four or five weeks to reorganize the army, and, first of all to pay us off, which will relieve us very much, as every body in the regiment has been strapped for the last two months

There is some of the finest country between here and Nashville, that there is in the world, and some very beautiful Mansions, they are all built after one plan & finish all of the houses between here and Louisville, are in the main alike, they are long, and rather narrow with the chimneys, on each end, on the outside running to the ground, and generally built of stone. They always front Side to the road with a door in the middle, ones which there is invariably a piazza, around which there are adornments, to suit the owners taste or Size of his purse. All the really good houses here are built of brick, but there are a great many near Nashville that have made great additions to this general plan, and have produced some truly Magnificent buildings; one in particular, belonging to Colonel Acklin, about two Miles from the city upon which there is said to have been expended in the house, and furnishing and fitting up the grounds, Ten Millions of dollars, - it is an awful big yarn to believe until you have examined the whole of it, I have had only a passing glance at it, but it is described as being a perfect wonder - The ground that is fitted up as the immediate enclosure of the house contains eight acres.

The State Lunatic asylumn is about Six miles this side of Nashville on the Murfreesboro

pike and as we came along by it. I rode out to it, in company with several others. it stands a half mile back from the road, - a very large, plain brick building, but put up with good proportions, and good taste, - the grounds were laid out very pretty, but the bathing house and the artificial lake fed by a spring near by, were arranged in such a beautiful & systematic manner as to elicit our admiration, but most of all, and by far the most beautiful as well as novel sight I ever saw, was a little circular pond, perhaps twenty feet in diameter, surrounded by a wall, rough jagged, & picturesque, varying in height from eighteen inches to ten feet, built of stone containing fossilated remains and specimens of petrifactions, - the stones have been selected, in the main, for their odd shapes, many of them resembling, a head of some animal, and in one case, a large stone on the highest part of the wall bore a striking resemblance to a man, and all these stone containing the fossil remains of some animals, birds, insects, or fish, - while the rest were still more interesting as being the most beautiful specimens of petrifactions I ever saw, and the greater part of these specimens were built into one in the center, and among the rest I saw petrified fish, birds, serpents, - one of the latter that was eight feet long, and almost perfect, - and what was still more wonderful there was a negro head

in perfect shape yet turned to a stone
Asside from all this, yet connected with it was a little cave formed of the same kind of material and the whole arranged in such a picturesque manner as to present a remarkable and very pretty picture, — These specimens were all collected in this State, and are very perfect
I broke a small piece from a large specimen of honey comb, in remembrance of the place and occasion,
I come in contact with a great many curious men and things & sights, that a description of would perhaps be interesting, but I have a good deal of other matter to think of, and it seems to take too many words to get them into anything of a readable form, to suit any complaint, which is the same one that has always troubled Post, — I have no real labor to perform, other than the supervision of this department, and I am getting so tired, — that is constitutional tired, that I am hardly in a fit condition, even to write a letter, and I am afraid, that I shall never be worth a cent to work again, — it really worries me, — but my hopes are, that I shall so thoroughly understand the art of Systematic, Legalized, Stealing, as to render it unnecessary for me again to perform Manual labor, — We will hope for this, while we continue to labor faithfully & manfully in the noble cause of getting all we can and keeping all we get
But I must to bed, so good night and happy dreams to you, while I crawl into my bunk of blankets & Sheep